



NEWS

Website: www.cya.ca.gov

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact:

George Kostyrko, CYA Assistant Director, Communications (916) 262-1479

Sarah Ludeman, Information Officer (916) 262-1473

Julio Calderon, Information Officer (916) 262-1474

July 26, 2000

YA 00-10

Two CYA High Schools Earn WASC Accreditation Status

FIRST CALIFORNIA CORRECTIONAL HIGH SCHOOLS RECEIVE 6-YEAR STATUS

SACRAMENTO – For the first time in the 59-year history of the California Youth Authority (CYA), two correctional high schools have been accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC).

When the Davis Administration came into office in January 1999, a commitment was made to win accreditation for all 11 of the Youth Authority's high schools. The Youth Authority schools serve about 6,500 wards and the authority is on track to have the 11 schools accredited by July 2002.

"We are grateful to Governor Davis for his stewardship in guiding this process," said Youth and Adult Correctional Agency Secretary Robert Presley. "California is determined to provide all students, incarcerated or not, with the best possible educational opportunities."

The newly accredited schools are the James A. Wieden High School at Preston Youth Correctional Facility in Ione (Amador County) and the Karl Holton High School at Karl Holton Drug and Alcohol Treatment Facility in Stockton. The two schools serve about 1150 wards.

The schools received six-year terms of accreditation.

This accreditation for comprehensive high schools is the same rigorous, review process used to accredit public high schools in California. The awarding of accreditation culminates a rigorous self-study done by both high schools in which the major focus has been on the standards-based curriculum and powerful teaching and learning. Accreditation is a major step towards increased community acceptance and will further emphasize and validate CYA's education program.

The WASC Accrediting Commission for Schools letter stated, "...this action was taken after careful study of the Visiting Committee Report, which noted many laudable aspects of the schools." WASC is an outside monitoring agency that objectively looks at the comprehensive education program and makes a determination as to the acceptability and quality of the overall program, assuring that a facility is operating within the

--more--more--more--

CYA RECEIVES WASC ACCREDITATION

2-2-2-2-2-2

framework of curriculum designed and approved by the State Department of Education. Accreditation assures the public that the school has a clearly defined purpose and appropriate schoolwide learning expectations, goals and objectives.

CYA Director Jerry L. Harper commended the staff and said, “For the past 10 years the Youth Authority has been working to make education the center of our rehabilitation efforts. This accreditation is an acknowledgement of the partnership within our facilities of security and treatment staff, administrators and educators to offer a quality high school education for these incarcerated youth that is equal to or better than the public schools within the communities in which they live.”

“The Youth Authority’s main objective in seeking accreditation is to ‘focus on student learning.’ The accreditation self-study, review process will improve the quality of teaching and learning in each of our eleven high schools statewide,” said CYA Superintendent of Education Dorrine Davis. The nine other high schools within the Youth Authority have been granted candidacy into the WASC three-year, self-study process. The process of accreditation fosters educational excellence and encourages school improvement through continuous self-study and evaluation.

Out of the approximately 6,500 students in CYA high school programs last year, 558 earned diplomas, with an additional 565 completing GED requirements and 29 earning AA degrees.

The CYA provides institutional training and parole supervision for juvenile and young adult offenders. The department also works with community organizations, local law enforcement and other agencies on gang and drug suppression and delinquency prevention activities.

##

A fact sheet on this process is available on the CYA website at www.cya.ca.gov or by calling (916) 262-1479.